than a century after the extinction of the Sung it had come to an end. The reign of Khubilai, during which, as we have seen, the conquest of China was completed, saw the Mongol Empire at its apex. From the vantage of several centuries, it is to-day clear that in spite of the splendor of his reign Khubilai, probably quite unconsciously, saw the tide of Mongol conquest reach its flood and even begin to ebb.

Theoretically, Khubilafs rule extended over all the vast domains in Asia and Europe occupied by the members of his family. Practically, however, in the sections more remote from China that suzerainty was little better than nominal and in wide regions disputed. Khubilai was, to be sure, the Grand Khan, but distances in the huge Empire were so great that the subordinate khans who possessed the actual rule in distant sections, especially in Central and Western Asia, were in practice almost, if not entirely, autonomous. During much of the life of Khubilai, moreover, a relative, Kaidu, effectively disputed his rule in much of what is now the New Dominion and the southern part of Siberia, and for a time invaded Mongolia and threatened Karakorum.

Another Mongol ruler, Nayan, a Nestorian Christian, whose domains were in Manchuria and Korea, joined Kaidu in defying Khubilai's power. Khubilai's forces defeated Nayan and put him to death, but Kaidu successfully continued his resistance until after Khubilai's death.

In several of his attempts to extend his domains, moreover, Khubilai notably failed. He succeeded in putting down revolts in Korea and in bringing that peninsula more effectively under the sway of the Mongols. When, however, he essayed to conquer Japan, he encountered signal defeat. Beginning

with 1268 he sent several embassies to induce the Japanese to submit without fighting. These having failed, in 1274 he launched against them an expedition of Mongols and Koreans. This effected a landing on the island of Kyushu, but the Japanese, although unable to cope in the open field with Mongol tactics and equipment, put up a stubborn fight and the invaders withdrew. A storm coming up, the Mongol fleet suffered heavy losses. After Khubilai had conquered the Sung, he renewed the attack on Japan with a much larger force. The maritime resources of the southern part of China were now at his disposal. In the summer of 1281 a huge